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EARTH'S ONLY PARADISE

A New England in America

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Issue No. 6: The Wealth of the Indies
A handful of traders struggled grimly throughout the 17th Century to win the riches of the East on behalf of their employer, the East India Company.

Issue No. 7: The Conquest of Canada.
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The Cover: A contemporary painting shows William Penn concluding a treaty of friendship with the Indians in 1682, an act that was the key to the future prosperity of Pennsylvania.

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GLOBE TOKEN

These tokens are valuable see inside back cover.

On this 17th-Century Dutch tile is the earliest known rendering of the *Mayflower*.

EARTH'S ONLY PARADISE

The defeat of the Spanish Armada smashed the last important barrier to England's overseas expansion. Within two decades she had established her first permanent colony in Virginia – "Earth's only paradise," in the words of one of the gentlemen-adventurers who left London on that pioneering mission late in 1606.

The consequences of England's bold leap westwards were vital to the future British Empire. Before the Armada, Philip II of Spain ruled all the permanent European settlements in the New World. A century later, England dominated the North Atlantic coast from Maine to the Carolinas. Had the story been otherwise, the history not only of North America, but of the Empire and the world might have been significantly different.

By Jim Hicks

Those still asleep at dawn aboard *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed* and *Discovery* were roused by excited shouts and the thump of feet running across wooden decks. The ones who could – some were too ill to lift themselves – rushed to join their companions. Clambering on to deck cargo and into the rigging, they sighted along the outstretched arms that gestured towards the western horizon. There: land. Virginia!

It was May 6, 1607. They had reached at last "Earth's only paradise," where, it was said, grapes grew finer and larger than in Europe, iron and copper abounded, and the soil was "the goodliest under the cope of heaven." But they had not come for soil, nor grapes, nor even copper. They were not farmers with families. There were few labourers – and no women – among them. Most were gentlemen-adventurers and their servants. They were here for gold.

Without the prospect of finding gold or silver the Virginia Company probably would not have sent them, nor would they have wanted to come. An earlier band of their countrymen, sponsored by Sir Walter Raleigh, had challenged the mysteries of this New World. The land they had settled was named Virginia in honour of Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, but it proved to be less than hospitable. John White, the leader of the new colony, returned to England in 1587 to plead for more supplies for the struggling colony on Roanoke Island. But he arrived at the moment when England was straining every resource to prepare for the life-and-death conflict with Spain; White's appeals went unheeded until the threat of the Armada was removed in 1588. When White came back to Roanoke two years later, he found the colony deserted. No survivors were ever found.

For the newcomers of 1607, storms and sickness had charged a toll of lives for their own passage, and one man, Edward Brooks, had perished from the heat when "his fat melted within him." Of the 120 who had left England six months before, 16 had died. Only gold could make such perils worth while.

Heady as they were with thoughts of precious metals, they could not help being awed by visible natural wonders as the ships stood into Chesapeake Bay. There were, said George Percy, such "fair meadows and goodly tall trees, with such fresh waters running through the woods as I was almost ravished with the first sight thereof." That day they also tasted some of the bitterness America held in store for them and other Englishmen to follow. Indians, "creeping on all fours like bears, their bows in their mouths," attacked a landing-party and wounded one of the men.

Up the placid James River they chose a site on which to settle. It was low and damp, close to a swamp teeming with pestilence-carrying insects, and hemmed by dense woods, which offered cover to hostile aborigines. They built a fort, naming it after King James, and began their search for gold. They would find none, and within a single year two-thirds of them would be dead. But they had founded the first permanent English foothold in North America. It was a beginning.

The Jamestown settlers were adventurers, but they could not have known the magnitude of the great adventure they initiated. In the wake of *Susan Constant* there followed a great movement of humanity. An island-nation off the coast of Europe stretched itself across an ocean and, despite appalling difficulties, peopled a giant continent – a whole new English-speaking world that would be rich and populous and powerful.

There were to be, in fact, two English Americas, whose economic, political and social differences endured long after they were in theory unified. One took root here at Jamestown. The other was planted 13 years later, far to the north.

On November 11, 1620, the ship *Mayflower* made a landfall on the low, sandy shore of Cape Cod. Some of the passengers fell to their knees and blessed God for bringing them "over ye vast and furious ocean." Others were not so grateful; they had bargained to go to the Virginia Company's territory and found themselves confronting instead the coast of New England, a land of hostile climate and infertile soil. They suspected, perhaps correctly, that this was not by accident but design – the work of the "Pilgrims" who now lifted their voices in prayers of thanksgiving.

There were 51 Pilgrims among the 101 passengers. These separatist Puritans rejected the Established English Church as being tainted by Catholicism. They had fled England years before to avoid imprisonment for their beliefs, taking refuge in Holland. Tolerated but unhappy there, they now came to America to establish a New Zion of their own. But the King had refused to guarantee their religious freedom in the New World, and there had been rumours they would not be welcomed in Virginia. The strangers among them grumbled their suspicion that the Puritans had given Providence a helping hand in causing their arrival at this wild, empty place.

Somehow the Pilgrim leaders won the confidence of the non-Puritans and persuaded most of them to sign a covenant pledging "all due Submission and Obedience" to such "just and equall lawes" as would be enacted for the general good of the colony. This agreement was necessary to replace the patent from the Virginia Company, invalid outside its territory, but the significance of the "Mayflower Compact" was to be greater than that. It established a precedent in English America: government based on consent of the governed.

The colonists landed at a harbour "very good for situation" and began

Pocahontas who, legend says, saved Captain John Smith's life, wed a colonist, John Rolfe, and died in England. A Cornish village, Indian Queen, preserves her memory.

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Captain John Smith (below) was a soldier of fortune, historian and explorer whose iron rule kept the Virginia colony alive during its first terrible year when disease and hunger killed two-thirds of the settlers. Smith wrote several self-glorifying books about Virginia; the title-page of one of them is seen at left.

building a town that they named Plymouth, but work was soon slowed for they began to die, sometimes two or three a day. During their first winter there were times when only half a dozen were well enough to care for all the others. By April, 1621, more than half of the original company were dead.

Considering the hardships endured in these earliest settlements, it is surprising there was any English America at all, much less two. The ships that delivered the Jamestown colonists had barely departed for England before the settlers began falling to malarial fever and Indian arrows. Had not so many been killed, it is likely all would have starved; their supplies were not sufficient to last even the six months before more came. Fish and game were available, but the settlers lacked either the skill or the inclination to make use of such resources. There were, said one of them, Captain John Smith, "no talks, no hope, nor worke, but dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, load gold." Attempts at communal farming were a miserable failure.

And they fought among themselves. When reinforcements arrived in January, 1608, one of the six appointed leaders was dead from disease, one had been executed, and two were locked up; only two were at liberty. That month fire destroyed their cabins and the storehouse, and in tents and exposed lean-tos more died. By now Jamestown was less an adventure than a horror story. It was said that stronger men dogged the footsteps of those close to death, waiting for the final collapse so they could feed on their companions' bodies. Putrid corpses of slain Indians were exhumed from shallow graves and eaten. In the year and a half before April, 1608, 197 men had left England for Virginia. Fifty-three remained alive.

From this terrible débâcle John Smith – or so his own account, the *Generall Historie of Virginia*, indicates – emerged as the only sensible leader. He bullied and cajoled the colonists into working; those who would not work, did not eat. He claimed to have introduced to the colony an Indian princess who became its bene-

In this contemporary painting, Pilgrims leave Delft, Holland in 1620 to return to England after more than a decade of self-exile. Their next stop was London, en route to America.

factress. The story says that he was captured and condemned to death by Powhatan, Chief of all Virginia Indians. As Smith's brains were about to be battered from his skull, the chief's 12-year-old daughter, Pocahontas, sprang forward and put her own head upon the Englishman's. Smith was saved, and Pocahontas became "the instrument to preserve this Colonie," bringing the settlers food and teaching them to grow native crops.

In 1609, some 500 new settlers arrived at Jamestown. These were not adventurers but true colonists, including about 100 women and children. More followed. By 1611, 900 had journeyed to Virginia – but only 150 of them still remained alive.

Why did they go? Certainly not all were deceived by the Virginia Company's blatantly false advertisements, which extolled the wonders of the new land and neglected to mention the hardships. The Spanish Ambassador to London told of three condemned English felons who were given the choice of going to Virginia or hanging. Two accepted transportation, but the third vehemently insisted he would rather die, and did. Yet Englishmen in increasing numbers were drawn accross the Atlantic, or were pushed. During the Great Migration of 1630 to 1643, some 65,000 left their homeland to seek their fortunes in North America and the West Indies.

Historians have set forth a number of explanations for this exodus, some citing national economic and political aims as the principal factors, others saying that social and individual motives were most important. It seems likely that all these established theories have some validity: no single impulse, but an interworking of many, carried English stock across the sea and planted it in America.

A feeling of nationalism was a factor. After defeating the Spanish Armada, Britons wanted to beat the old rival at her own game of colonization and stake their claims to the New World. The spreading of Christianity was also a motive, one that was given prominent place in the original Virginia Charter. John Smith's contention that "reducing heathen people to civility and true religion" took precedence over "gaining provinces" was a widely held belief – or a widely touted one, anyway. It is probably fair to say that this show of crusading zeal was mainly lip-service and, like anti-Spanish patriotism, of minor importance in this great transplantation of a people. The true national motive was economic.

Spain had grown fabulously rich on gold and silver from Peru and Mexico. The Virginia Company was so certain that England could do the same from Virginia – a notion not nearly as fanciful then as it seems to us today – that two goldsmiths were included in the first lot of settlers. Alas, the shipload of ore that the colonists soon sent home with great anticipation turned out to be iron pyrites, fool's gold.

Despite this and other prospecting disappointments, precious metals continued to encourage colonization indirectly. Like other major powers, England subscribed to Mercantilism as the way to build a wealthy and self-sufficient nation. This meant she must sell more abroad than she bought, so the balance of payments could be accumulated in gold and silver in London's coffers. Colonies were integral to this system, since they sold to the mother country raw materials she would otherwise have to buy from rivals. This was particularly important to seafaring England, since America could provide the shipbuilding timbers and naval stores previously obtainable only from Baltic states.

The colonies, too, would serve as a captive market for goods manufactured at home. During the 16th Century,

Europe's supply of hard money – gold and silver – had increased threefold, and England's flourishing merchants had managed to grab their share of it. Now they were eager to invest this capital in the expansion of Empire. The Crown also had a vested interest in overseas growth, since its income would be increased by duties on trade between England and the colonies. Historians have ample cause, therefore, for saying that the nation's wealth, and her ambitions to be yet wealthier, were of prime importance in the planting and development of the colonies.

But that can be, at most, only half the story. Scores of thousands of men, women, and children did not yank their roots from English soil and subject themselves to a gruelling, often dangerous journey and an uncertain future because it suited a grand economic design. Tenant-farmers and artisans, the bulk of the migrants, were surely less moved by schemes emanating from Whitehall or the City than by their own personal needs and desires.

Their motives were more personal; many derived from these same economic factors, which tended to operate on poorer people in a negative fashion. The increase in trade and money-supply had caused inflation and a tremendous rise in the standard of living of the upper classes. While prices climbed spectacularly, working men's wages, which in England were fixed by the landed gentry acting as magistrates, remained low. If a man refused to work for the wages prescribed, he could be jailed or forcibly bound over to a master. In rural areas, poverty was made more acute by rapid expansion in the wool industry. As more and more land was dedicated to sheep, fewer and fewer acres required farm workers. Under the near-feudal English tenantry system, landlords simply turned unwanted families on to the roads and by-ways. Ironically, a decline in plague and scurvy during this period aggravated the situation; fewer deaths meant more unemployment for the survivors.

Bustling Plymouth, sketched about 1620, was the Pilgrims' last port of call before the *Mayflower* sailed for America. By coincidence, the Pilgrims settled first at Plymouth, so named by Captain John Smith six years earlier.

The PILGRIMS' LONDON

As they struggled to survive the howling New England winters, the Pilgrims must often have recalled with mixed feelings the city on the Thames they had left behind in 1620. The comforts might indeed be missed, but not the worldly fleshpots of "Merry London town." For that fledgling metropolis, with more than 200,000 lively citizens, was the most formidable social, political, intellectual and mercantile unit in England. Rich and vibrant, rapidly outgrowing the ancient City boundaries, London attracted then – as it still does – a host of visitors, including a Dutch artist, Michael Van Meer, who did these water-colours of London life sometime about 1620.

London Bridge, still bearing houses in 1620, was the only Thames crossing until 1750; hence the small ferry-boat seen in the foreground.

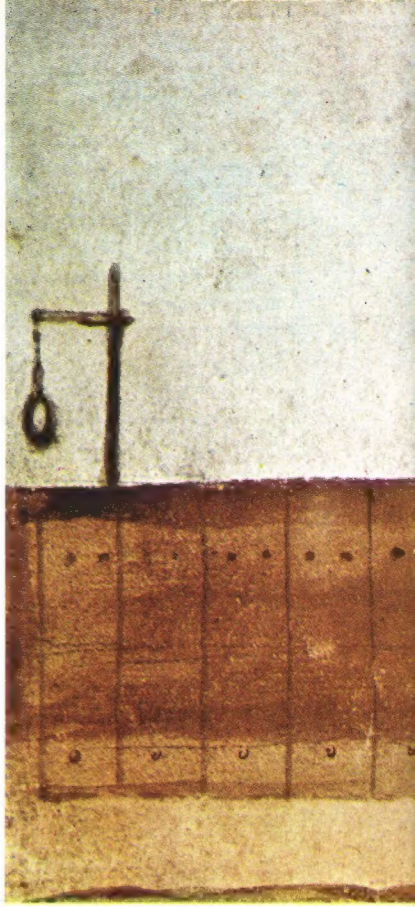
When James I (shown on horseback) came from Scotland to succeed Elizabeth in 1603, he tried hard to win the affection of his English subjects. Frequent processions through London's streets made him a familiar figure, but never won him the respect he craved.

The Bishop of London, as an important member of the ecclesiastical establishment, was active in rooting out dissent of the kind preached by the Pilgrims and thus hastened their flight from England.

A full measure of entertainment

The spirited citizens of 16th-Century London delighted in a wide range of pastimes. The brutal spectacles provided by bear-baiting and dog-fighting were still popular despite the humane protests that were beginning to be heard. Music there was in plenty, for England was then the land of glorious song. And of course there was the magnificent theatre. Though Shakespeare had been dead four years when the Pilgrims left for America, his moving dramas and witty comedies still brought perceptive audiences to the theatres across the river. Sober merchants and their wives, skylarking apprentices and their sweethearts strolled over London Bridge; highly placed men from Whitehall and clever young lawyers from the Inns of Court came more fashionably by boat.

While illustrations of the theatrical scene are rare, other activities, like jousting and falconry, reflected the persistent appeal of medieval sports. But none of London's recreations were missed by the austere Pilgrims: they deplored them all.



Jousting, obsolete in battle after the

Spectators at a cockfight encourage the bird they bet on to kill its opponent with the long, sharpened steel spurs attached to its shanks.

introduction of muskets, was changed into a game in which the lance was lowered (as indicated) to spear a padded bag.

Hunting with falcons, gentlemen pursue an aristocratic sport whose origins go back to ancient Egypt. Training these birds to hunt and retrieve took skill and patience.

People on their busy errands

All day long the city's twisting streets echoed with the noise of active people, like those pictured here, going about their business. Many of them brought food: apples and cherries from Kent, already called "the garden of England," wheat and rye from all the south-east. To this hubbub was added the sounds of cattle and sheep on their way to Smithfield Market and the clatter of horses bearing self-important King's Messengers, impatient travellers and prosaic farm produce. A continuous pageant was played on the narrow pavements shadowed by overhanging gables that brought the top storeys of houses across a road close enough to touch.

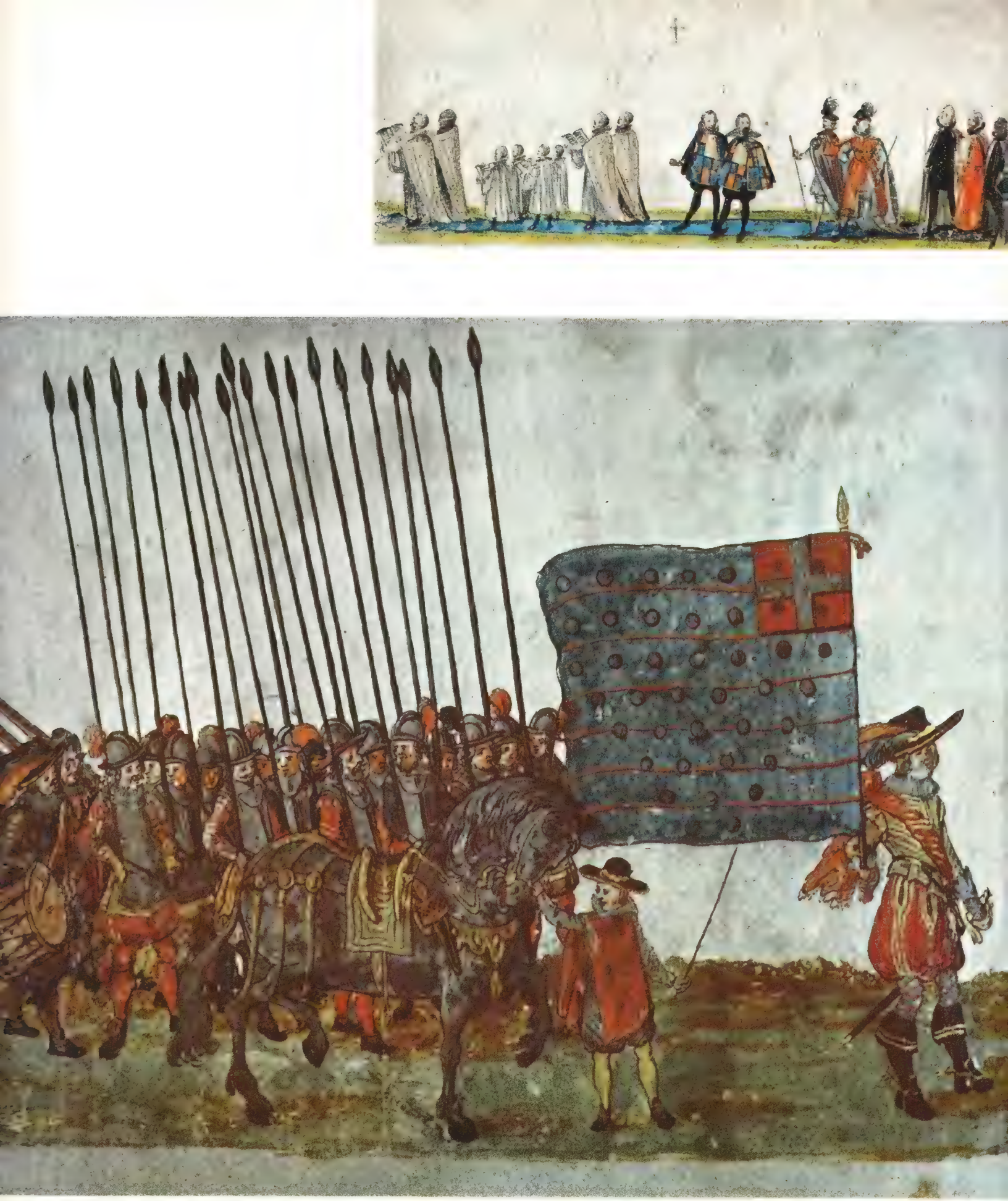
Although the town was spreading rapidly outside its old walls, there were still small open spaces in the heart of the City, and houses with gardens, courtyards and stables. Here lived the citizen-merchants and those who depended on them. Through their power and their privileges, these citizens and their Mayor, backed by a formidable militia, formed a self-governing state inside the larger monarchical and aristocratic England – a curious development that was watched with interest throughout the country and regarded with cautious respect by London's presumed master, the King.

While his groom holds the bridle of his handsomely accoutred horse, a well-to-do merchant bids his wife good-bye before setting out on a business journey.

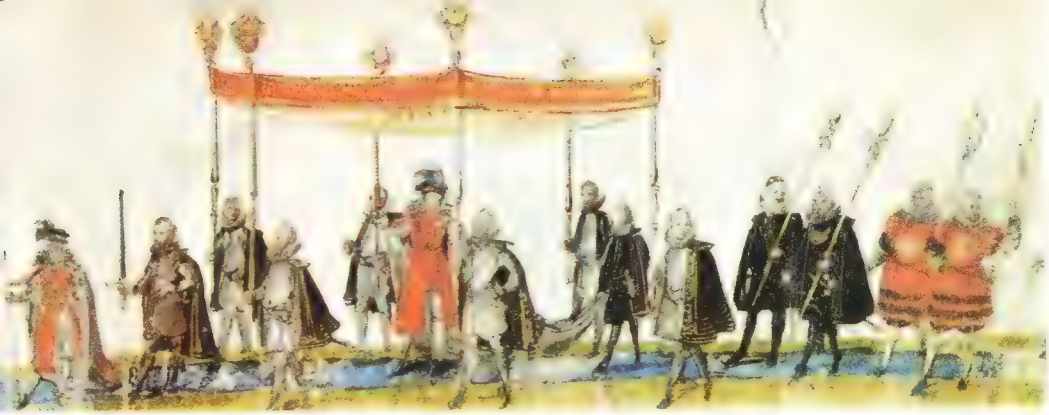
The waterman, his path lit by the lantern in his dog's mouth, makes his early morning rounds, delivering good drinking-water to houses that lacked a suitable well.

A farmer heading for one of the London produce markets walks with a laden basket while his wife rides between the two ample panniers filled with vegetables.

Carters, men "who live . . . very gainfully," were beginning to replace the porter (right) who used to move most heavy loads.



While some of the soldiers parading here carry muskets, others are still armed with pikes. But the pike would soon go the way of the longbow, discarded as a weapon in 1595.



In gorgeous procession, James I walks under a heavy canopy, preceded by priests, choirboys and Knights of the Garter, attended by distinguished courtiers and followed by some halberd-carrying Yeomen of the Guard.

An Unpopular Monarch

When James I succeeded Elizabeth in 1603, he boasted that he was a master of the art of "king-craft." He had reason to be pleased with himself: he had survived a harrowing childhood after the forced abdication of his mother, Mary Queen of Scots; as a young man he successfully manœuvred to exert his rule over the same fractious nobles who had ousted Mary. But in London it was a different story.

Englishmen were offended by his slovenliness, his garrulity and by the crowd of grasping courtiers and needy adventurers who came with him from Scotland. The King made matters worse by his severity towards Puritan clergymen as contrasted with his politeness towards Roman Catholic priests. The Pilgrims, most radical of Puritans, quickly felt the King's wrath and fled to Holland for safety in 1607. English anger erupted at James's assertion of the Divine Right of Kings, a doctrine that placed him above man-made law. However, stronger than any disaffection was the fear of civil war if James should be supplanted. So the English suffered his crotchets and softened him with flattery as he observed the rituals of monarchy, some of which are illustrated here.

The costume worn by the Order of the Garter in 1620 had changed little since this oldest and most important English Order of Knighthood was founded in the 14th Century.

Since Norman times, the Tower of London had been the symbol of royal authority, and a much feared prison where enemies of the Crown were executed. James I had Sir Walter Raleigh beheaded here.

II. Two Differing Nations

Poverty and economic depression led to a generally accepted feeling that Great Britain was overpopulated. That this was not, in fact, true is inconsequential (the problem was one of wealth distribution, not population, and by the end of the 17th Century the country was bemoaning a *shortage* of manpower). Whether or not they could see the real cause, English working men could not escape the depressingly evident effects. John Winthrop, a Puritan, said that Man, "the most precious of all creatures, here is more vile and base than the earth we tread upon." Thus it was that some Englishmen went in search of dignity to a land where men, because there were fewer of them, would be more highly valued, and where they could not only buttress that dignity but feed themselves and their families from the produce of freehold property of their own.

Many who were not so inspired were sent to America anyway, frequently with one-inch holes burned in their ears for the crime of not having a job. Authorities thought that "venting" England's population through emigration would solve their problem of widespread pauperism. Hundreds of homeless children were swept up from the streets and handed over to the Virginia Company as bonded servants and prisoners, some incarcerated for stealing less than a shilling (stealing more than a shilling invoked the death penalty), were dumped into the tide of humanity flowing towards America.

There was another, very important, motivation. While England may not have taken seriously her proclaimed purpose of disseminating the Gospels, religion did become in another way one of the crucial pressures that propelled Englishmen to the New World – for those who settled in New England, probably the most crucial, for their emigration was as much involved with politics as with faith, since the two were inextricably entwined.

Official treatment of Puritans and other minority religious groups, especially under the direction of the dreaded Archbishop Laud, was shocking, and certainly provided good cause for leaving the country. For writing a pamphlet criticizing the Church of England, a man named Alexander Leighton was fined £10,000, pilloried, whipped, had both his ears cut off, his nose slit, his face branded, and was imprisoned for life. Such persecution was not rare. It can hardly be entirely coincidental that when this particular sentence was pronounced on Leighton in 1630, John Winthrop and boats bearing thousands of additional Puritan emigrants were nearing the New England Coast of America.

Despite a continued influx of colonists, life in Virginia in the early years re-

Churchgoing Pilgrims wear the sombre clothing given them by 19th-Century artists. It is now known that they used colours, but in moderation.

mained hard and dangerous. Under the original charter, King James promised the settlers that they would "enjoy all liberties, franchises and immunities . . . as if they had been abiding and born within this our realm of England." Control of the colony was to be shared between the "planters," or colonists, and the shareholders in England who had invested £12. 10*s*. each. But the disastrous early period required more attention to the grim business of staying alive than to the niceties of the charter.

From 1611, the company ran the colony as a military establishment. A series of dictatorial governors imposed harsh discipline. For missing daily religious service, a man was sentenced to loss of rations. For profanity: flogging on the first offence, a bodkin driven through his tongue the second time and death the third. For swearing in God's name: death for the first offence. A group who tried to escape in 1612 by stealing the colony's boats were variously hanged, shot and broken on the wheel.

Tobacco, not stringent laws, proved the salvation of Virginia. The tobacco that grew there when the first colonists came was too bitter for English smokers, who preferred the milder Spanish product from the West Indies. John Rolfe, one of the 1609 arrivals, learned how to cure the leaf to make it palatable and in 1613 the first consignment of Virginia tobacco was sent to London.

Here was something about the New World that men with money could appreciate. Sixteen pounds of tobacco had as much value as a good horse. A new class of settlers began to arrive: men with capital who could amass the large tracts of land necessary and who could afford the labour to clear it of trees. They imported hordes of bonded servants – some of whom had contracted to work for 21 years before they could gain their freedom – and were granted amounts of land that varied according to the number of workers they brought in.

Virginia achieved a modicum of civilization. Sir Edwin Sandys, the company treasurer, shipped 100 single women to Virginia in 1619 in a "maids for wives" project. That year it was decided that the colony was at last ready for partial self-government. County representatives formed themselves into the first legislative body in America, the House of Burgesses, modelled after the Commons. In 1619, too, the first cargo of what would become in the years ahead an important and bitterly contested trade arrived in Virginia: 20 black slaves.

Yet hard times were not over. Between 1618 and 1622, 3,000 colonists died of disease or starvation. In 1622, Indians, who had been at peace with the Englishmen for some years, massacred 347 of the colonists in one day and launched a war that continued off and on until 1644, when their leader, Opechancanough, was captured and killed.

In the early 1620s, while the colonists battled against Indians and hunger, the men in London who ran the Virginia Company – and who should have been providing guidance and support for the beleaguered plantations – were engaged in a nasty and noisy power struggle among themselves. Company members withheld their subscriptions; funds dried up; plans for building hospitals, schools and churches were cancelled and much-needed supplies failed to reach the colony.

James I, who believed the source of the trouble to be the "democraticall" nature of the company's structure, took steps to save the colony. In 1623 the Privy Council was placed in temporary charge of its affairs and the following year the company was relieved of its charter for its failure to fulfil its responsibilities. Virginia became England's first royal colony, with the Crown exercising the rights and duties that had been the company's, and again began to grow in numbers and prosperity. In 1624 there were about 1,200 Englishmen scattered through 19 settlements. In the next ten years, the population multiplied by five, and the basis of the new country was firmly laid.

Now the wealthy tobacco-growers began squeezing out the smaller farmers who had pioneered up the James River. In this they were aided by grants of 50 acres that were given for each head of labour imported, and the manipulation of "head rights" became a scandal. Head rights certificates could be bought for cash from corrupt clerks in the Governor's office. A Colonel Ludlow, with a certificate for 40 head rights, simply added a zero and was granted 20,000 acres. Owners of big plantations were invariably appointed County Commissioner, an office modelled after that of the English magistrate, and as such controlled taxation. On their own great estates these aristocrats enforced law and dispensed justice as they pleased. The humbler inhabitants of the colony had no part in the conduct of its government.

The lower classes became increasingly dissatisfied, especially after the Navigation Act of 1660, one of several which compelled colonists to ship goods only in English vessels and only to England. Unscrupulous British merchants took advantage of this law to underpay planters, and the sharp drop in tobacco prices was more painful for the small landowner than the large one. And Sir William Berkeley, who had been a well-liked Governor in the 1640s, proved not so popular when he was reappointed in 1660. It was said that a marriage to a much younger wife made him "peevish and brittle." His power was practically absolute and his interest was most definitely not with the common man. "I thank God," he wrote to the Lords of Trade in a report on the colony, "*there are no free schools . . .* for *learning* has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world."

The Governor's obstinacy led to the

A fashionable dress like this certainly went to Massachusetts in the baggage of the more well-to-do Pilgrim ladies, contrary to the persistent legend of their dowdiness.

most intriguing event in this period of American colonial history. Because Berkeley failed to put down Indian risings on the frontier, a plantation-owner named Nathaniel Bacon organized a private army to subdue the natives. The Governor had him arrested for fighting Indians "without a commission." This led to a revolt in 1676 by angry colonists – essentially a struggle for power between Berkeley and Bacon in which Jamestown changed hands several times. Eventually, Berkeley fled and Bacon convened an assembly that he called the "Commons of Virginia." His régime issued proclamations, confiscated property and enforced its own code.

Then, in October, 1676, Bacon died of dysentery and his rebellion collapsed. Many leading rebels were captured. William Drummond, one of Bacon's followers, received a particularly effusive greeting when presented to the triumphant Berkeley: "Mr. Drummond, you are very welcome. I am more glad to see you than any man in Virginia. Mr. Drummond, you shall be hanged in half an hour." In fact, it took slightly longer to confirm the sentence and erect a scaffold. Berkeley hanged 23 of Bacon's lieutenants, and the body of the first American rebel against British authority, Nathaniel Bacon, was sunk in a river in a weighted coffin; he was precisely one century ahead of his time.

Virginia's pattern of a slave-based plantation economy, with a fairly rigid class structure and political power concentrated in wealthy men, was repeated in other southern colonies, sometimes with variations determined by peculiarities of their charters. Virginia's charter had been granted to a company of shareholders; that of Maryland was conferred on a proprietor, Cecilius Calvert, later Lord Baltimore.

In 1632 Charles I gave Calvert almost feudal rights to what had been the northern part of Virginia, stretching (in theory at least; succeeding colonial grants tended to overlap previous ones to a disconcerting degree) from New England to the Potomac River. The King stipulated that laws must be enacted with "the Advice, Assent, and Approbation of the Free-Men" of the colony, but Calvert owned all the land and had the power to appoint and dismiss government officers.

A Catholic family, the Baltimores wanted Maryland to be a refuge for English Catholics, but most of the first settlers who arrived on the *Ark* and *Dove* in 1633 were Protestants. Jesuit priests almost caused a mutiny on the *Ark* by committing the ship to the care of "Holy Mother and St. Ignatius" before it was out of sight of England. In fear of losing his charter because of such tactless overexuberance, Baltimore forbade the Jesuit Order to own land in Maryland.

In 1649, the Maryland Assembly controlled by Baltimore passed a law mainly designed to protect his fellow Catholics, but which was none the less an important milestone in the establishment of freedom of religion in America. Under pain of a whipping or a ten shilling fine, this Act of Toleration forbade any person to call another "an heretic, schismatic, Idolater, puritan, Independent, Presbyterian, popish priest, Jesuit, Jesuited papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Brownist, Antinomian, Barrowist, Roundhead, separatist, or any other name or term in a reproachful manner relating to matter of religion." What one could call a Lutheran other than a Lutheran was not explained, but the catalogue of banned terms indicates how hotly religious tempers burned in those days.

Maryland followed Virginia's example of tobacco cultivation, but failed to achieve its neighbour's prosperity. Colonists objected to the Baltimores' one-family rule, and resented paying ground-rent, which Virginia's farmers usually managed to escape. Most Protestants preferred to settle in Virginia because they disliked Catholics. The owners of large Maryland estates had to compete fiercely to attract a sufficient number of tenant-farmers and labourers.

At last Protestant disaffection led to violence within the colony. After Protestant insurgents marched on the capital, St. Mary's, William and Mary took the colony away from the third Lord Baltimore in 1689. He retained only his property rights. Years later the Baltimores converted to Anglicanism, and in 1715 Maryland was restored to them. It remained a family concern until the American Revolution.

Carolina, established after the Restoration as a hopeful source of income for men close to Charles II, was founded on a structure even more peculiar than Maryland's. The King granted the charter for "Carolana" to eight proprietors, including the Earl of Shaftesbury, in 1663. Its "Fundamental Constitutions," adopted in 1669, were said to have been devised in part by John Locke, who later made more lasting contributions to political philosophy. This impractical set of laws envisaged establishing in the wilderness one grand council, no less than eight supreme courts, various colleges, a parliament and a nobility. The use of English titles being forbidden, the peerage was to be divided into ranks of landgraves (a German title), caciques (Spanish for Indian chiefs), and lords of manor, a noble's position depending on the amount of land he held. It also gave all settlers religious freedom, possibly because few would come otherwise.

These "Fundamental Constitutions" were never actually enforced. Most of the titles died with their first holders, and as the proprietors kept changing the terms of the "fundamental" laws, the colonists paid little attention to them, but assembled and passed laws for themselves. These in turn were vetoed by the proprietors. At one time there was not a single local law in force in southern Carolina.

Despite this, the southern Carolinians thrived. The first settlers who landed at the site of Charleston in 1670 suffered none of the cruel hardships endured at Jamestown 60 years earlier. The land was unsuitable for tobacco, but they learned to grow rice as an export crop. Charleston was a natural centre for trade and soon became the leading metropolis in all of southern America.

North Carolina was isolated from both the southern part of the colony and from Virginia by swamps and wilderness. Its politically rowdy and independent farmers – they were not disposed to any government, especially one with tax-collectors – grazed cattle and grew tobacco and corn on their relatively small holdings. North Carolina was the only substantial exception to the basic pattern of the southern colonies. On the whole, southern English America – warm in climate, aristocratic in rule and with a largely plantation-based economy – had more in common with the British West Indies than with the nation that was then coming of age in New England.

THE DIVINE WEED

Within a few years after Columbus first encountered tobacco in the New World, it was widely known in Europe, Asia and Africa, where it was smoked, chewed and sniffed, as in this satirical drawing. Poets called it "divine," critics damned it as the "sotweed," doctors used it as a cure-all, and Virginia thrived on its profits.

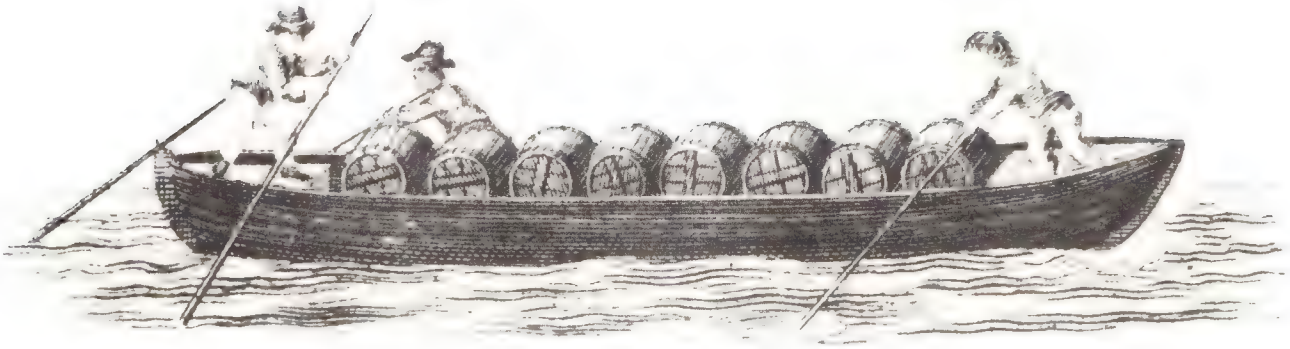
An early drawing of the tobacco plant combines botanical accuracy with fanciful imagery: the little cupid takes snuff to suggest that this humble "herbe" has erotic powers.

The Birth of a pernicious habit

Wherever they went, early explorers of the Americas found that the Indians held in reverence a plant whose dried leaves they smoked at ceremonial occasions in a tube called the "tabaco." Curious Europeans tried smoking, found it pleasant and brought the custom back home. In a matter of years travellers reported that the practice had been introduced by visiting sailors to remote areas of Asia and Africa.

England first took up smoking shortly after Elizabeth I became Queen in 1558. By the 1570s, the habit was widespread. In 1587, Sir Walter Raleigh received a letter, and some tobacco, from one of the colonists in his ill-fated Virginia colony of Roanoke. Raleigh introduced smoking at Court, and soon "tobacco-drinking" (as it was then called) became the mark of the fashionable courtier and man about town.

On its second try, England successfully planted a colony in Virginia, but at first it was touch-and-go whether it could survive. Then John Rolfe perfected a method of curing tobacco and shipped a small cargo to London in 1613. By 1619, the annual shipments totalled 20,000 lb. A decade later they had soared to 1,500,000 lb. and succeeding years saw a continual increase. Virginia's financial future was assured.



Most of Virginia's tobacco was sent to deep-water ports on oared river barges (above). Planters who were forced to use roads turned their loaded hogsheads into carts (below).

A Virginian tobacco-planter, on his private wharf, eases the task of supervising the loading of his crop with a pipeful of his own tobacco and an imminent glass of wine.

A Futile "Counterblaste"

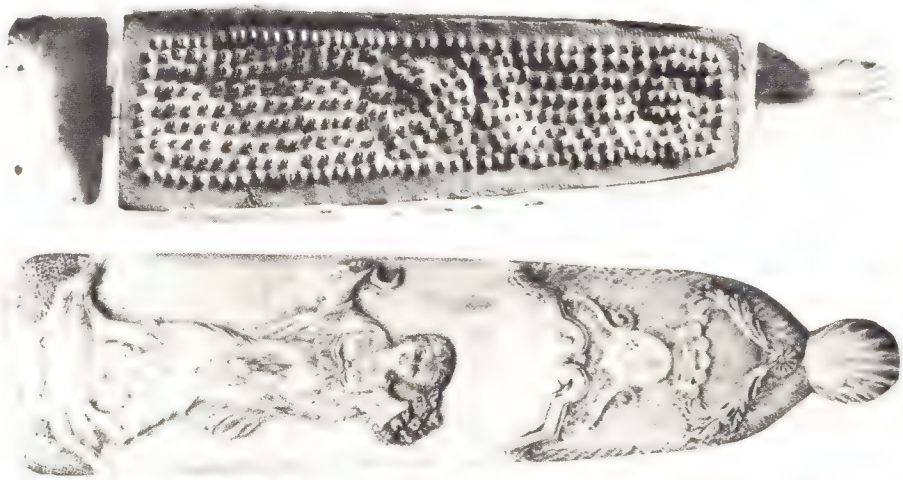
Almost from the outset, smoking was under attack, even though learned men considered it the most important remedy that America had supplied for all manner of disease. The most renowned critic was King James I, who in 1604 published his *Counterblaste*, which he hoped would finally end smoking. Had his efforts succeeded, the King might well have rued the loss of the large customs revenues from tobacco; in fact the pamphlet made tobacco better known and more popular.

But James persisted, for he feared for Virginia's future if it continued to be "built on smoke." He imposed an exorbitant duty to discourage smoking. This both encouraged smuggling and led the British to grow tobacco in England. Then he suggested that Virginia planters breed silkworms instead of planting tobacco. The colonists laughed.

Successive governments tried and failed to stem the use of tobacco. By 1650, the effort had ended. For tobacco was too profitable, and the numerous ships it made use of were invaluable schools for the sailors needed by the Navy. From then on, tobacco flourished.

This 17th-Century broadside attempted to shame English smokers into dropping their habit by showing that smoking lowered them to the level of the heathen Turks.

Signs like this marked tobacco-shops in the late 1680s. The wooden discs, painted either light or dark brown, simulated the different tobaccos sold at that time and in this shape.



The tobacco-grater (top), kept in the ornate box shown below it, was used early in the 18th Century to turn tobacco into snuff. Soon, however, snuff was being made by a horse-powered mill in a factory (right).

A

COVNTER-

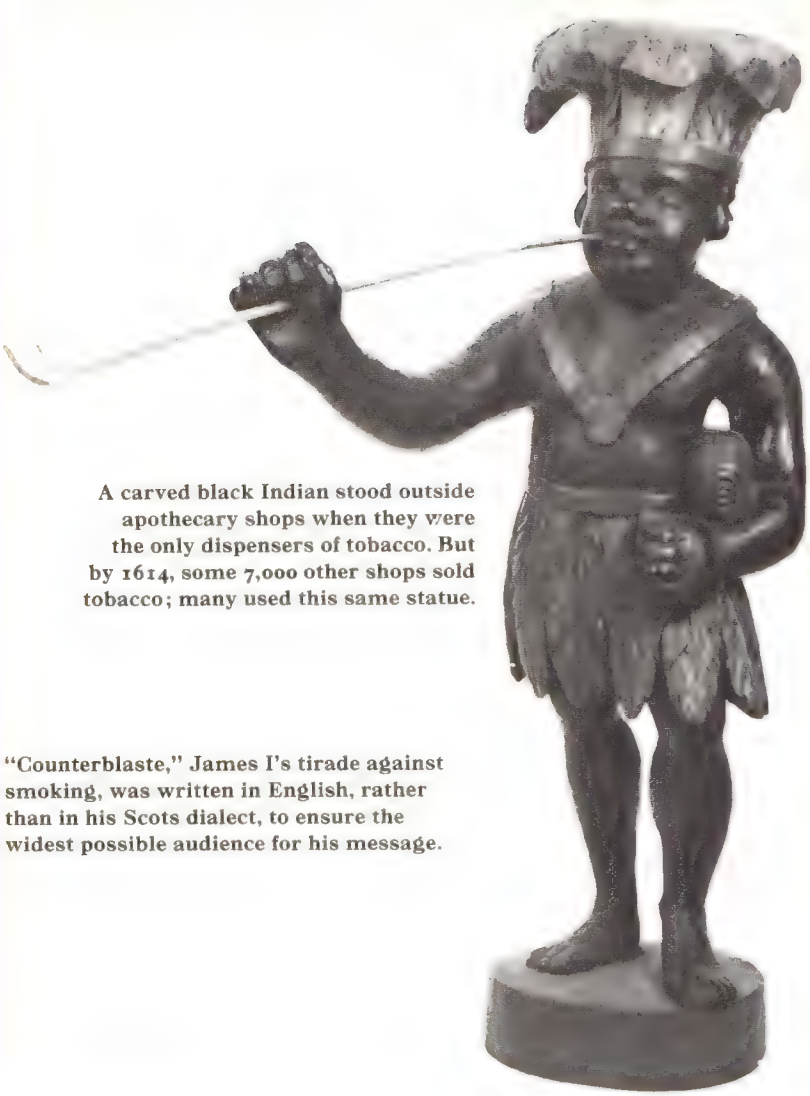
BLASTE TO

Tobacco.

¶ Imprinted at London

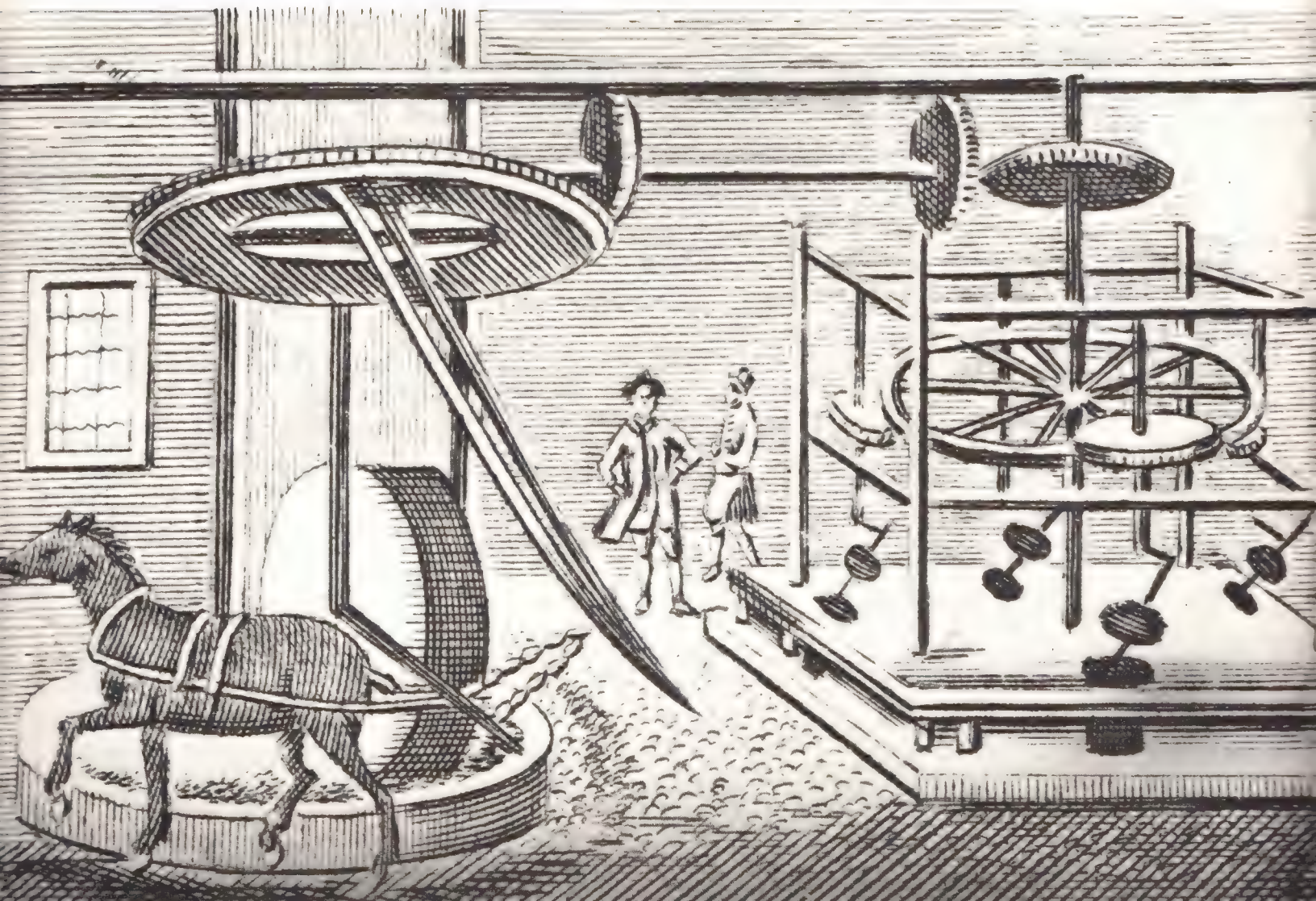
by R. B.

Anno 1604.



A carved black Indian stood outside apothecary shops when they were the only dispensers of tobacco. But by 1614, some 7,000 other shops sold tobacco; many used this same statue.

"Counterblaste," James I's tirade against smoking, was written in English, rather than in his Scots dialect, to ensure the widest possible audience for his message.



III. A Patchwork of Sects

"All great undertakings," said William Bradford, the first Governor of Plymouth, "must be both enterprised and overcome by answerable courages." The Pilgrims considered theirs a great undertaking and found the courage to answer it. Much was required. Their early years were no easier than Jamestown's. Eighteen married women arrived on the *Mayflower*; only four were alive the following summer. In addition to sickness, the Pilgrims faced starvation. They were hardworking and law-abiding, but they simply could not produce enough food. Kindly Indians taught them how to cultivate native corn, and in 1623 communal farming was abandoned in favour of small family plots. After this, they managed to subsist.

Plymouth proved not so "good for situation" as they had thought, and failed to grow, but other colonists followed the Pilgrims to the shores of New England. By 1628, there were eight settlements along the coast. That year the Massachusetts Bay Company was granted a charter for land between the Charles and Merrimac rivers, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This was usual for colonial grants; no one knew how far away the Pacific was. The trustees planned to develop their new colony as a purely commercial venture, along the lines of Virginia. In 1629, however, a group of Puritans gained control of the Bay Company, an event that determined the future of New England.

These Puritans were not separatists like the Pilgrims; they sought to reform the Church of England, "their dear mother," from within. This distinction did not prevent their being persecuted, however, and they too looked on America as a New Zion, a place to "live under a due form of government, both civil and ecclesiastical." Theirs was a mass exodus from England. Eleven shiploads of colonists arrived in Massachusetts in June, 1630. By the summer of 1633, ten or 12 ships were arriving each month. In 1643, the population of Massachusetts numbered 16,000 – more than the rest of British America put together.

The Puritans were well equipped for building a new society. No other colony began with so many educated men. There

Cotton Mather, eminent Boston divine, firmly believed that witches existed; his books on the subject helped to stimulate the hunt for hapless victims in Massachusetts.

was a university graduate in one out of every 40 homes in Massachusetts, an extremely high ratio for the period. Their charter was unlike that of Virginia in that it did not require the company headquarters, and thus the government, to be established in England. All-but-autonomous sovereignty crossed the Atlantic with the Puritans.

They had not the least intention of providing a refuge for any victims of persecution other than themselves, nor were they interested in creating a democracy – a word they regarded with abhorrence. John Winthrop, the first Governor, called their system a "mixt aristocracy." Membership in their sect was the basic requisite for voters, but even faithful Puritans had to be approved by the members of the charter company before being enfranchised.

Many of their Bible Commonwealth's laws were contrary to those of England and in violation of the charter. They were enforced with vigour none the less. A non-Puritan, Thomas Morton, fell into disfavour by gathering to his home at Merrymount "all the scum of the country." There they drank beer and brandy and – shades of paganism – danced about a Maypole. The Maypole was felled, the house burned, and Morton, who objected to leaving America, was hoisted aboard a ship by block and tackle and deported to England.

The Puritans enjoyed a peaceful relationship with the Indians at the beginning. This was partly because they scrupulously insisted on paying the natives for the lands they settled, a process assisted by an epidemic of the White Man's smallpox which killed off many Indians in 1633. "The Lord," observed Governor Winthrop sanctimoniously, "hath cleared our title."

At times it seemed the Indians were the only people with whom the Puritans were friendly. They were engaged in a long legal struggle with Sir Ferdinando Gorges, an English aristocrat who claimed the Massachusetts territory on the basis of an earlier royal grant (kings were not so meticulous as Puritans in regard to land titles). The suit ruined Gorges. He later established a rival colony, Maine, which Massachusetts eventually bought out. Charles I was less than pleased with the Bay Colony's air of independence and governmental arrogance, and only political troubles at home halted his plan to install the Puritans' nemesis, Archbishop Laud, as overseer of all the colonies.

Governor Winthrop, a cool, self-assured lawyer (one of his reasons for emigrating was that in England his talents for "public service were like to be buried"), and his fellow oligarchs also made enemies within the colony. Some of those disaffected left Massachusetts to found new settlements of their own.

One such was Roger Williams, who had arrived in 1631. A separatist like the Pilgrims, he made his way to Plymouth, where Governor Bradford decided that he was a good man, but "unsettled in judgement." Returning to the Bay Colony, this brilliant preacher publicly condemned the practice of state-enforced religion, and denounced Massachusetts' churches for being "full of Anti-Christian pollution." When the Puritan leaders tried to banish him to England in 1636, Williams fled to the woods. He fetched up near Narragansett Bay where he established a community that became Providence, Rhode Island.

continued on p. 136

A witch was legally defined in the 17th Century as "a person who hath conference with the Devil to consult with him or to do some act." The man who wrote this, Lord Coke, a renowned jurist and a cool, clever, pragmatic man, was not given to flights of fancy. Yet neither he nor most of his contemporaries had the slightest doubt that witches existed, nor that they must be discovered and punished mercilessly. Unfortunately, Coke bent the facts on which he constructed his logical case to fit his preconceptions. There were indeed people in remote places who still practised an ancient pagan religion. To believing Christians like Coke, this was proof that they were witches in league with the Devil. The addition of one more factor – the Puritan Revolution that put England's government in the hands of Oliver Cromwell and his rigidly dogmatic servants – created the ensuing terror.

A
CONFIRMATION
And Diſcovery of
WITCH-CRAFT,
Containing theſe ſeverall particulars;
That there are Witches called bad Witches, and Witches untruely called good or white Witches, and what manner of people they be, and how they may bee knowne, with many particulars thereunto tending.

The hunt for witches reached its greatest heights in East Anglia, and the book whose frontispiece appears above is but one of many works published to justify the judicial murders in these eastern counties. After some 200 men and women were executed for witchcraft between 1645 and 1647, common sense reasserted itself and there were no further trials.

Forty-five years later, and nearly 3,000 miles away, madness erupted again. But the Salem witchcraft trials were more sinister: here, religious hysteria disguised political power-hunger.

In 1692, the leaders of the Puritan theocracy of New England were fearful that they were losing the authority they had wielded for seven decades. Now a "gospel-glutted" generation was no longer willing to accept the authority as God-given. Neither flogging nor even the hanging of particular Quakers and Baptists quieted the rising opposition. So, when charges of witchcraft were first heard in Salem, the ruling ministers, led by Cotton and Increase Mather, saw an opportunity to whip dissenters from Puritanism into line.

A West Indian slave and two eccentric old women were accused by ten teenage girls of having put them under a spell. Had this first incident been dismissed as youthful hysteria, the affair could have ended at that point. Instead, it was treated with the utmost seriousness, brought to trial before a judge and jury, and the three accused were found guilty. Other accusations followed. As neighbour denounced neighbour, 150 people of Salem were haled before the court for having had congress with the Devil. During three dreadful months, 19 victims were hanged. In large part, these were people of independent views who had angered the authorities, but several were merely old eccentrics.

When the fever burned out, there was an orgy of public grief and repentance. Jurors confessed their error in heeding "spectral evidence"; Judge Samuel Sewall devoted a day each year thereafter to penitent prayer and fasting. Even Cotton Mather conceded that some of the victims had been unjustly sentenced. But the "witches" were dead.

In one of the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692, George Jacobs (kneeling at right) was convicted on young girls' testimony and hanged.

With no charter or authority other than some Indian deeds, Williams and his followers contrived in Providence what was probably the purest democracy ever known in an English-speaking community till that time. There was no established Church and no compulsion to support religion. To Williams and Rhode Island, for which he secured a Parliamentary patent in 1643, the United States owes much of its essential traditions of liberty of conscience and separation of Church and state.

Even more unpopular with the Governor's crowd was Anne Hutchinson, a woman "of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a very voluble tongue." Winthrop opined that she was "more bold than a man, though in understanding and judgement inferior to many women." The fact that the Hutchinsons lived across the street from Winthrop no doubt galled him the more bitterly, since he could watch from his windows as Bostonians flocked to her home to hear her criticize him and his ally, John Wilson, at that time Boston's leading preacher.

She disagreed with Wilson's interpretation of the Bible so intensely – she believed he and other Puritan leaders followed the letter of the Mosaic law but missed its message of spiritual serenity – that she would rise from her pew and stamp out of church whenever he began a sermon. She overreached herself in 1637, when her clique opposed Winthrop in an election. He won, and lost no time exacting his revenge. Late that year the General Court called her for a public examination. She slipped into heresy by claiming to have experienced personal revelations from God. She later recanted, but was banished from the colony and excommunicated for good measure. "I do cast you out," that kindly Puritan, John Wilson, proclaimed, "and in the name of Christ I deliver you up to Satan."

She and some followers founded their own Bible Commonwealth communities at Portsmouth and Newport, near Williams's Providence. They were later incorporated into the province of Rhode Island. After her husband died in 1642, Mistress Hutchinson herself went on to Westchester, New York. A year later she and her household of 16 persons were murdered by a marauding Indian tribe.

Perhaps the strangest religious renegade was Samuel Gorton, banished from Massachusetts for saying the Scriptures were no more than "tales." He went to Portsmouth, where he was whipped for wildly swinging his arms about in court and calling the judge an "ass," albeit a "just" one. From there he moved to Providence. Even that tolerant community could not abide his "unclean and foul censures of all the ministers" and banished him. He set up his own town nearby, later named Warwick, and from there ceremoniously challenged Massachusetts to combat. The irritated Puritans sent 40 men who captured Gorton and bundled him off to England. Warwick became part of Rhode Island. Gorton later returned and lived there, presumably more calmly.

A preacher named Thomas Hooker fell out with the Massachusetts Puritans over the requirement that political suffrage be based on adherence to the approved religion. In 1636 Hooker led the first of those mass pilgrimages that would characterize American westward expansion. Driving herds of cattle and transporting their belongings in covered wagons, Hooker's people set off for the Connecticut Valley to establish a colony where property, not religion, was the key to enfranchisement.

Not all those who left Massachusetts were seeking a more liberal environment. Theophilus Eaton and John Davenport believed the Bay Colony too lax in its adherence to Biblical law. They left in 1638 and founded a rigorously strict theocracy – the Church, in effect, *was* the state – at a place they called New Haven. This experiment came to an end in 1662 when Charles II issued a charter making all of Connecticut, including New Haven, one colony.

Although founded on bitter differences, these "spin-off" colonies – with the exception of Rhode Island, regarded by the others as the black sheep of the New England family – co-operated with Massachusetts when facing common problems. In 1643 they created the New England Confederation, a league that settled border disputes, dealt with hostile Indians, held the line against encroachments from the Dutch to the south and the French to the north, and schemed, unsuccessfully, to bring about the collapse of Rhode Island.

Life in New England was not all religion and politics. The Puritans had another consuming interest: work. This was fortunate. Only a people conscience-bound to the Protestant work ethic could have extracted livelihoods from this mean land. In the South, men with capital could sow tobacco or rice, sit back, and wait for the soil to give them a fortune; in the North, the hilly, rocky earth after much coaxing would grudgingly yield a bare existence, but anything beyond that had to be derived from other sources.

New Englanders answered this challenge with diligence. Most farmed, and had another livelihood besides. They were manufacturers, traders and fishermen as well. Cloth was produced in almost every home. By 1660 there were three commercial woollen-mills in operation. At Lynn, Massachusetts, the settlers started shoemaking as soon as they founded the town. Immediately after finishing his house in Boston, John Winthrop began building a coastal trading vessel. Before long, New England's fishing- and trading-boats could be found at work all along the coast of North America and plying the waters of the West Indies.

By 1675 New England must have seemed to its inhabitants a relatively civilized place. Boston was a thriving port, and about 100 other towns and farming settlements stretched along the coast from Maine to Long Island and inland up the Connecticut River Valley. In that year, the colonists were sharply reminded that the country of their choice was still a wild land.

After 40 years of peace, Indians came to the realization that before long these Englishmen would force them from their ancestral territory altogether. Led by King Philip, Sachem of the Wampanoag tribe, they made a desperate and pathetic – but none the less bloody – attempt to change the direction of history. Beginning with Plymouth in June, 1675, they started a series of murderous raids which continued, sporadically, for three years.

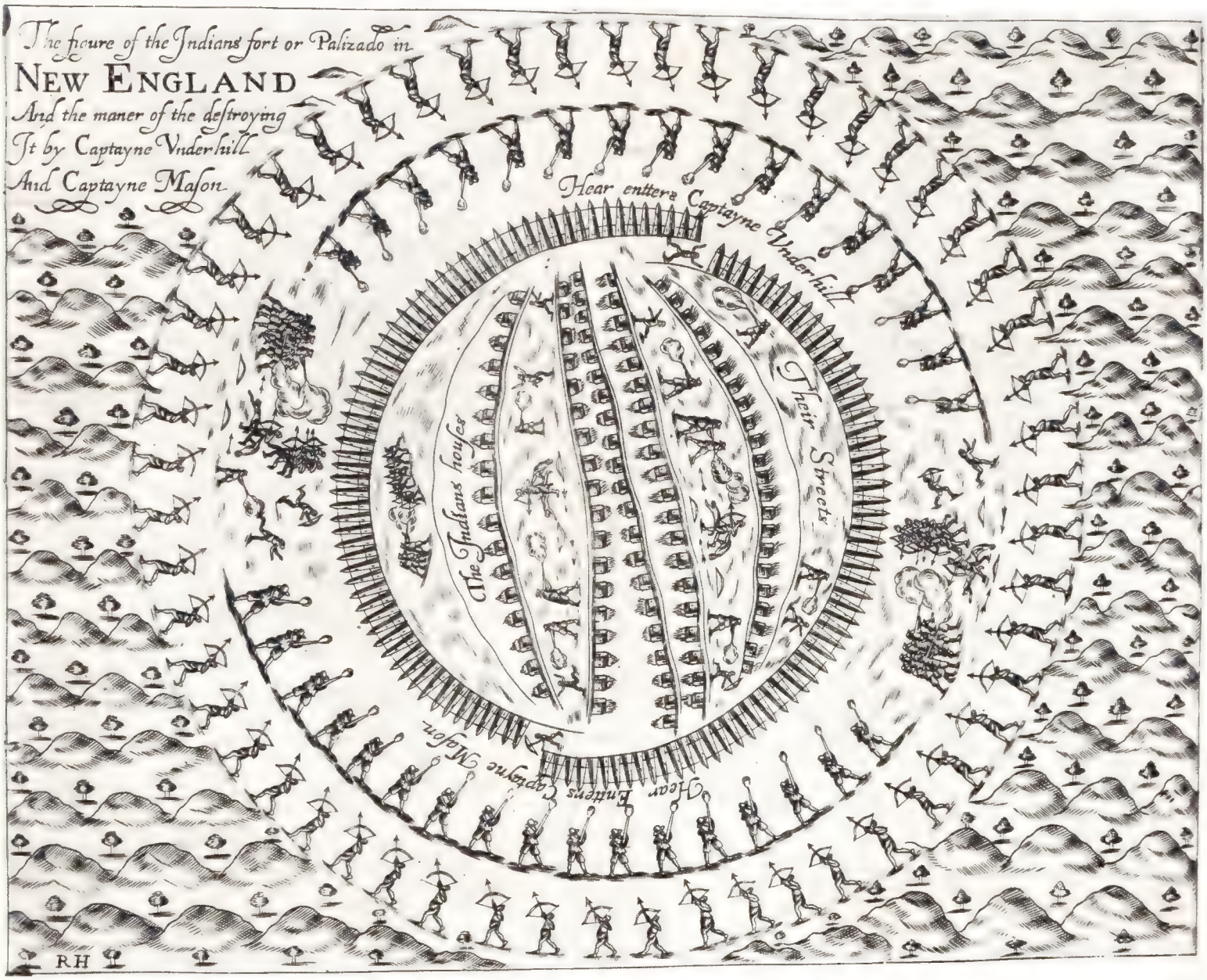
This 1638 drawing depicts the reprisal raid by Connecticut colonists during which 500 Pequot Indian men, women and children were burned alive. A long peace followed.

The New England Confederation responded with equal determination and better weapons. When it was finished, they had once and for all extinguished the Indian threat to New England as well as countless Indians, including King Philip. But the cost was dear. A dozen towns were totally destroyed, some 40 were badly damaged by fire and 1,000 settlers had been slaughtered. One in ten New England men of military age had been killed or captured, and a huge sum of money had been expended on the campaign. New England won the Indian War, but was enfeebled by it.

Some forces in England, not least the King, had long wished to curb the power of the Puritan establishment in the northern colonies. After the Puritans had executed four Quakers, a Royal Commission had recommended in 1664 that the charter of Massachusetts be revoked because the colonial government denied religious liberty to non-Puritans. Now, while New England still reeled from King Philip's war, Charles II made his move, abrogating the charter and assuming direct royal control over Massachusetts in 1684.

James II, even more desirous of bringing the colonies to heel, two years later appointed Sir Edmund Andros Governor of all the newly established "Dominion of New England." Andros infuriated the Puritans by attempting to grab their lands. Their town records of ownership were invalid, he said, and their Indian deeds of "no more worth than a scratch with a bear's paw." When news of the Glorious Revolution, which made Protestant William of Orange King in place of Catholic James, reached Massachusetts in 1689, indignant Puritans took up arms against Andros and imprisoned him. He almost escaped dressed as a woman, before a guard noticed his man's boots beneath the frock. Andros and his councillors were shipped to England in 1690 and the following year Massachusetts was granted a new charter.

In colonizing North America, Great Britain followed no systematic master plan. While the South was being settled according to the schemes of profit-motivated companies or individuals, and while the North was expanding on a pattern determined largely by unorthodox religious and political impulses, England neglected the area between. Into this gap, in some ways the most promising



part of the American seaboard, moved the Dutch.

Between 1568 and 1648, the Netherlands were involved in a long and arduous struggle with Spain and Portugal from which the Dutch emerged as Europe's greatest trading nation, with more ships carrying more goods than any other country – including England. In the Atlantic, the main offensive was carried by the Dutch West India Company, a quasi-official organization with its own naval and military forces.

New Netherlands, found by this company in 1624, was less a true settlement colony in the sense of Virginia than it was a trading centre. The colony claimed large amounts of land, but little of it was actually occupied. Its growth was hampered by legal institutions that prospective settlers found less than enticing. A feudalistic land policy provided huge estates for "patroons," rich men who could bring in 50 or more workers, but made almost no allowance for small freeholders. There was no self-government, and the leadership imposed from Holland was generally inept and unpopular. In 1664, some estimates put the population at no more than 1,900, of whom about 600 were Englishmen.

But New Amsterdam, at the mouth of the Hudson River, the only important settlement in New Netherlands, was a natural centre for commerce – the finest on the whole eastern seaboard, as its later existence as America's largest city was to prove. The British resented the Dutch intrusion, even more because New Amsterdam drew trade from English colonies to the north and south, offering European goods at favourable prices. Fierce commercial rivalry led to a series of wars between the two countries in the mid-17th Century. During this period (although not, as it happened, during a declared war) Charles II seized a chance to consolidate British control of the North American coast and, probably not incidentally, benefit the depleted royal treasury. He repeated a previously stated claim that New Netherlands was in reality British territory. In 1664 he sent Colonel Richard Nicolls to substantiate this assertion.

Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch Governor (by far the best New Netherlands had known), was determined to resist. Not so, the phlegmatic, business-minded burgomasters of New Amsterdam. They demanded to see a letter from the English in which terms for surrender were offered. When Stuyvesant tore it to shreds before

Charles II granted New Amsterdam to his brother James (above) after its capture. Later, as James II, he continued the Dutch practice of controlling the colony through aristocratic governors.

them, he was obliged to piece it back together. The terms were liberal. Four days later the protesting Governor was escorted from the ramparts of the Dutch fort on Manhattan Island, and New Amsterdam surrendered to the British ships in the harbour without firing a shot.

Charles gave the colony to his brother, the Duke of York, in whose honour New Amsterdam was renamed. York, later James II, was reluctant to allow the settlers – some of whom were English – any more liberty than they had enjoyed under the Dutch. When they convened assemblies despite his objections, he rescinded the laws they enacted. After James lost England's throne in 1688, a German-born settler, Jacob Leisler, led a rebellion in New York. A new Governor sent by William and Mary hanged Leisler, an unfortunate indication of the monarchy's "new" attitude towards the colonists. Still, New Yorkers were given permission to establish representative government the following year.

The large and rich area between New York and Maryland was developed by Quakers, who suffered as much disfavour in England as did Puritans. It is easy to see why persecuted minorities wished to emigrate to America; it is more difficult to understand why the British authorities who opposed them granted them so much of the New World. In the case of Pennsylvania, which became one of the most populous and important colonies, it was a matter of Charles II discharging an old obligation to a faithful servant, Admiral William Penn.

Penn's son, also named William, had rejected the cachet of his aristocratic birth and Oxford education to become a Quaker, causing his father much distress. The young William, who had previously spent some time in the Tower for an anti-Anglican pamphlet, was arrested in 1670 for addressing an "unlawful and tumultuous" assembly in Gracechurch Street. His disputation in court inspired the magistrates to label him impertinent, saucy, pestilent and troublesome. The jury found him guilty only of "speaking in Gracechurch Street," which caused the court to threaten to have a juryman's nose cut and Penn staked to the ground if they did not return a "proper" verdict. The jurors then found him not guilty and were themselves promptly sent to prison.

Troublesome though he was to the Establishment, because of his father's services Penn was granted in 1681 the area which became Pennsylvania, where he proposed to undertake a "Holy Experiment." The Duke of York threw in Delaware and the Quakers purchased the rights to New Jersey, part of the former Dutch colony. The King insisted on including "Penn" in the name of the colony as a tribute to his old friend. Fearing charges of vanity from his co-religionists, the younger Penn tried unsuccessfully to bribe a royal clerk to drop the idea.

The founder of Pennsylvania was one of the great early American idealists. He devised a "Frame of Government" in 1682 which set forth "the good of the people" as the purpose of government. "Governments rather depend on men," he wrote, "than men upon governments." He avoided the bloodshed so recently experienced in New England by contracting a series of solemn treaties with the Indians in his territory. He set up a representative legislature and personally planned the colony's capital, Philadelphia, the permanent establishment of the colony's government and the launching of a campaign to attract immigrants from the Continent and Ireland as well as from England.

His Quaker followers shared his idealism. Some 10,000 of them had experienced the horrors of English prisons, and were determined that their own should be modern, humane reformatories. They opposed slavery and the death penalty, and they planned and built hospitals and asylums. They encouraged settlement by strangers of other nationalities. But soon after Penn returned to England – he spent less than two years in Pennsylvania – the Colonial Council and Assembly began an interminable series of factional squabbles. "Let all old sores be forgotten as well as forgiven," Penn wrote them. "For the love of God, me, and the poor country, be not so governmentish, so noisy, and open, in your dissatisfactions."

He had other troubles. Suspicious of the Penn family's friendliness with James II, William and Mary took control of the colony in 1692. It was returned to Penn two years later, but was still wracked by

A playing-card praises life in Pennsylvania. But the colony was torn by dissent as pacifist Quakers refused to arm themselves against French and Indian attacks on settlements.

Dutch New Amsterdam (Manhattan) was settled in 1625. After the English captured it in 1664 they renamed it New York after James, Duke of York. This early map shows the wall, now the great financial centre Wall Street, cutting vertically across the island.

party differences. German and Scotch-Irish settlers on the vulnerable frontier boiled with anger because the pacifist Quaker government would not legislate for, or provide money for, defence. When war against the French and Indians blew up in the 1750s, this issue became paramount. Rather than violate their beliefs by taking up arms, the Quakers in 1755 yielded the government of the colony to non-Quakers.

Not all their humanitarian goals were realized, but they prospered in their productive, easily cultivated land. They made Philadelphia a centre for trade and investment. By the time of the revolution against Great Britain, it was a truly cosmopolitan place of 40,000 inhabitants, the leading city in America.

The British Empire in America was more than a hundred years old when the last colony, Georgia, was founded. Officially, England was at peace with Spain, but the border between Carolina and Spanish Florida had never been firmly fixed. In the early 18th Century, Spanish troops and brigades of escaped Carolinian slaves under Spanish command harassed the southernmost British plantations. Georgia was conceived both as a buffer against this encroachment and as a Utopian social experiment.

It was mainly the work of one man, James Edward Oglethorpe. Oglethorpe's humanitarian instincts made him – like Penn – an anachronism in his callous age. Having headed a Parliamentary investigation into the evils of English prisons, Oglethorpe was distraught about the plight of good men and women locked away in those brutal, disease-ridden holes for crimes no worse than being in debt. He proposed that they would make excellent colonists.

Georgia was carved from the southern part of Carolina and granted to Oglethorpe and a group of friends, who were to hold the charter for 21 years, after which it would revert to the Crown. At the request of these trustees, the charter specified that they would gain no profit from the new colony; Georgia was not to be a commercial proposition. Parliament granted £10,000 to help transport and establish the settlers. Trustees and other benefactors provided the remainder of the necessary financing. Supported by private benevolence, the colony did not have to impose taxes and therefore had no need for a representative assembly to levy taxes. Since Georgia was planned as a paternalistic settlement for unfortunate settlers, there seemed no reason to allot them any responsibility for their own welfare.

Oglethorpe, like Penn, treated the Indians of Georgia with fairness; he even purchased from them the land needed for settlement. He was a benefactor to the Moravians, a small Protestant sect from central Europe, and a loyal friend to the Jewish colonists when some settlers sought to expel them. Hospitality was also extended to German Lutherans, Scotch Highlanders, to the Methodist leader John Wesley and his magnetic colleague, George Whitfield.

Oglethorpe personally led the first colonists to Georgia in early 1733. They called him "Father," because he ruled them as a benign dictator. But his well-intended laws restrained the growth of the province. Seeking to avoid the concentration of land common in Virginia, Carolina and Maryland, he limited each family's holding to 50 acres, which could not be sold nor forfeited for debts. Slavery was forbidden. Because of these restrictions, Georgia's rice could not compete in price with that produced on the larger, more efficient, slave-based plantations to the north.

Considering the auspices under which the colony was founded, it is rather sad to note that most of the permanent settlers were small-minded conformists. Lacking the generosity and tolerance of an Oglethorpe, they wanted nothing better than to live like rich Carolina planters. So the Georgians became unhappy about Oglethorpe's paternalism. They drank despite his prohibition of liquor and began to "hire" slaves – for life. The land policy was gradually eroded until 50 acres were allowed for each member of a family, and estates became transferable.

In 1750 the ban on slavery was revoked outright and owners were allowed to count slaves as family members in calculating the amount of land they could possess. By 1752, when disillusioned trustees handed over the colony to the Crown, Georgia was becoming much like any other southern American province, a territory where rich planters could enjoy a life of ease and elegance derived from vast plantations and the work of slaves.

Georgia was an effective bulwark against the Spanish, but by this time, the mid-18th Century, Spain was no longer the most menacing threat to Britain's American Empire. There were more dangerous forces at work on its borders – and within them.

The outward-moving edge of English civilization had for decades been colliding with expanding French settlements to the west in the Mississippi Valley and to the north in Canada. These clashes were growing in frequency and violence. It was evident that soon the two Empires would be locked in a decisive struggle for domination of this continent.

Perhaps less apparent at the time, but more important in the long run, was the potential for conflict that was growing within the Empire itself. From the beginning, Englishmen in America had moved towards control of their own lives and affairs – sometimes slowly, often haltingly, but rarely taking as many steps back as they took forward. Cromwell's Revolution had been welcomed in many parts of the New World, and when England returned to the old system of royal authority, some colonies were loath to do so. From the Restoration the paths of England and English America began to diverge.

The gap widened rather than narrowed after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, because American Englishmen were informed that as colonists they did not qualify for the newly won rights and liberties of their cousins at home. (Some historians blame the government of William and Mary rather than that of George III for the American Revolution.) The colonists resented the Navigation Acts which regarded them as chattels created to enrich the mother country. They still maintained that they were Englishmen, but they had been on these shores for a century and a half since the early agonies at Jamestown, and the land they were transforming was in turn transforming them. They were fast becoming a new nation of Americans.

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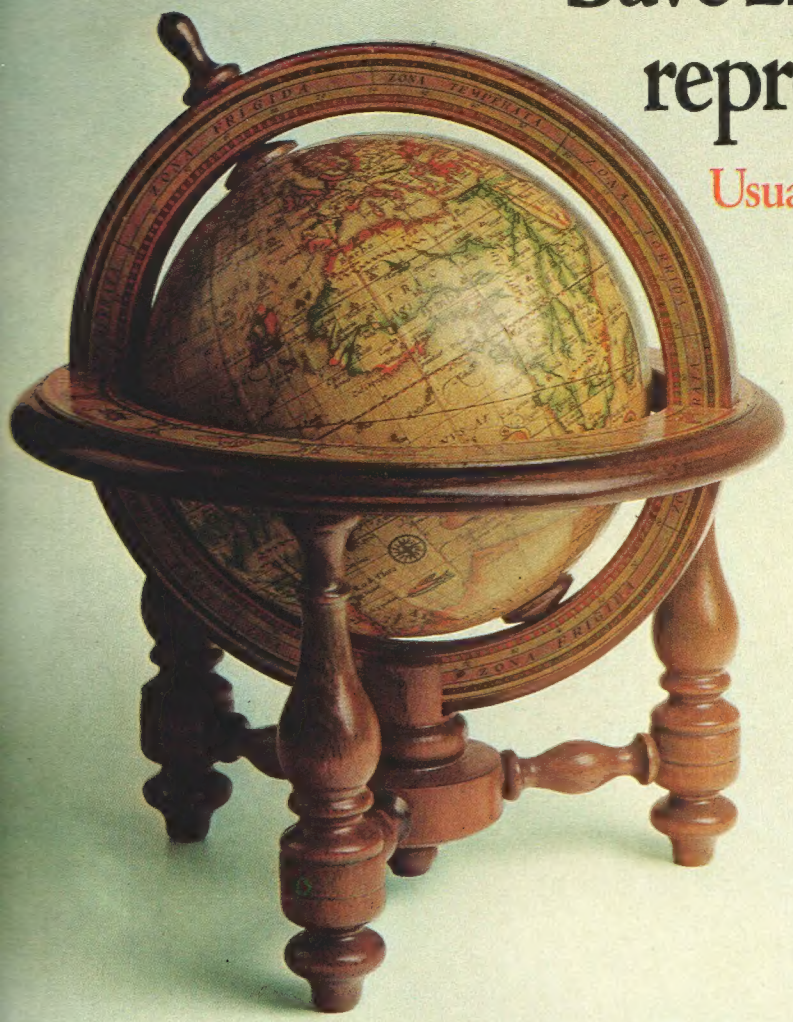

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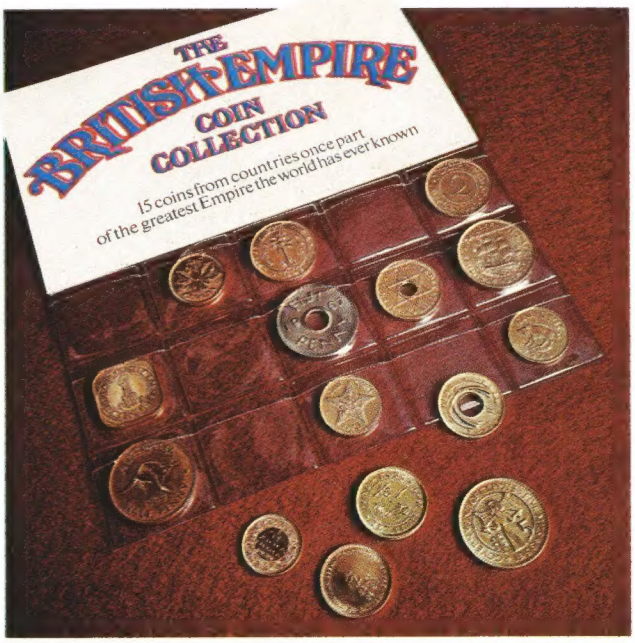

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How the token scheme works

Each week, there are two tokens on the inside front cover of *The British Empire*. This week, there's the third green British Empire Coin Collection token and the first brown globe token. Each week, you should collect these tokens to take advantage of the exciting offers that are on their way. And every week, as you collect towards the current offer, you'll be getting a start towards the next.

Note: If you miss a token, your newsagent will be able to order the appropriate back number of *The British Empire* for you.

All offers applicable to the British Isles only.

Morning dress, 1802